

St. Brendan's Episcopal Church

Juneau, Alaska

"A Harbor for God's Love"

Holy Communion with the Reserve Sacrament

The Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026 ~ 10:30 am



The Mission of the Church:

The mission of the Church is to restore all people to
unity with God and each other in Christ.

Catechism, Book of Common Prayer, Pg. 855

We welcome visitors. Take a moment to sign our guest book in the narthex, and join us for coffee hour after the service. Please join us in worship again, and may God bless your week.

*Before the service, speak to the Lord;
during the service, let the Lord speak to you;
after the service, speak to one another.*

Holy Communion With Reserve Sacrament

Led by Worship Leaders trained and licensed by the Diocese of Alaska

Dave Muldoon ~ Officiant

Musicians ~ Stephanie Hall, piano & Elena Levi, violin

The Third Sunday in Lent

Sunday, March 08, 2026

Liturgy of the Word

Please stand as able and join in singing the Opening Hymn.

Opening Hymn

All standing as able, the Officiant says

BEYOND THE DAYS

Ricky Manalo, CSP

Refrain

Be - yond the days of hope and mys - t'ry we
see a light of faith re - newed, and in our long - ing
we thirst for guid - ance to walk with you day by day.

1-4
to Verses

Final

day, to walk with you day by day.

Verses

1. For - ty days and
2. Not on bread a -
3. In your hands, O
4. On our Lent - en



1. nights, you guide the steps of our jour - ney. May your
 2. lone are we to walk on this jour - ney. Speak the
 3. God, we feel the touch of your guid - ance. Keep us
 4. path we see the dawn of a new day. Be our



1. pres - ence be felt in the whis - per of your voice.
 2. words that give life to the yearn - ings of our hearts.
 3. safe in your care: may your gen - tle - ness be there.
 4. vi - sion of hope; be the prom - ise of our lives.

© 1997, Ricky Manalo, CSP. Published by OCP. All rights reserved.

Reprinted & Streamed with permission under OneLicenseA-721147. All rights reserved.

Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.
His mercy endures for ever.

People

Confession of Sin

All kneel or stand as able.

The Officiant says

Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.” *Mark 12:29-31*

The Officiant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence.

Officiant and People together say

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

The Officiant says

Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Officiant says

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The following is sung, all standing as able.

Lord Have Mercy

Lord, have mercy. *(three times)*
Christ, have mercy. *(three times)*
Lord, have mercy. *(three times)*

Collect of the Day

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

First Reading

Exodus 17:1-7

Jackie Schulz

All sit.

A Reading from the book of Exodus.

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Remain seated.

Venite, exultemus

- 1 Come, let us sing to the LORD; *
let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.
- 3 For the LORD is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.
- 5 The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.
- 6 Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the LORD our Maker.
- 7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *
Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!
- 8 Harden not your hearts,
as your forebears did in the wilderness, *
at Meribah, and on that day at Massah,
when they tempted me.
- 9 They put me to the test, *
though they had seen my works.
- 10 Forty years long I detested that generation and said, *
“This people are wayward in their hearts;
they do not know my ways.”
- 11 So I swore in my wrath, *
“They shall not enter into my rest.”

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Rome.

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Reader

The Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

Sequence Hymn

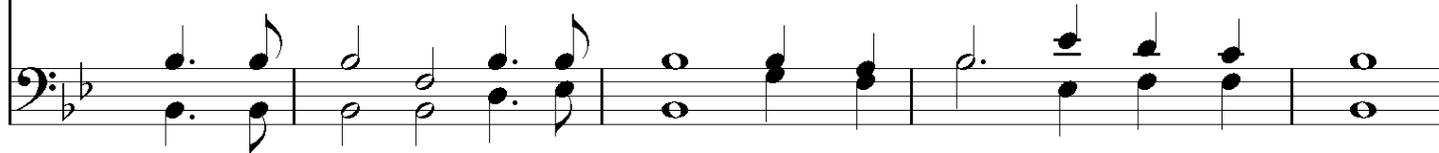
All stand as able.

Rock of ages, cleft for me

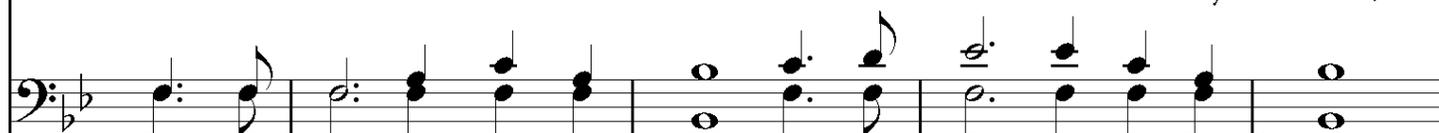
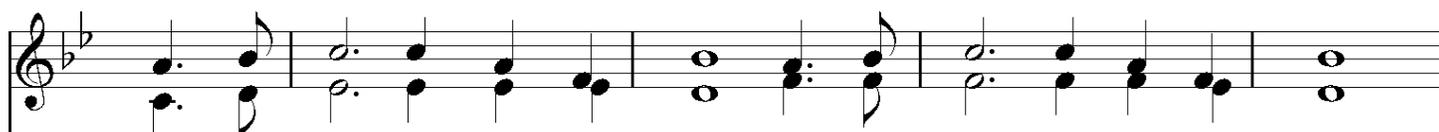
Hymnal 685



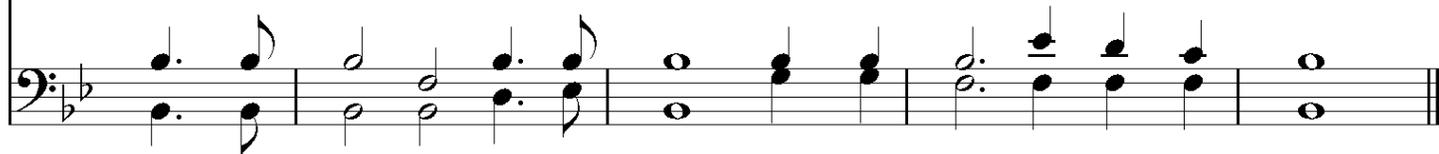
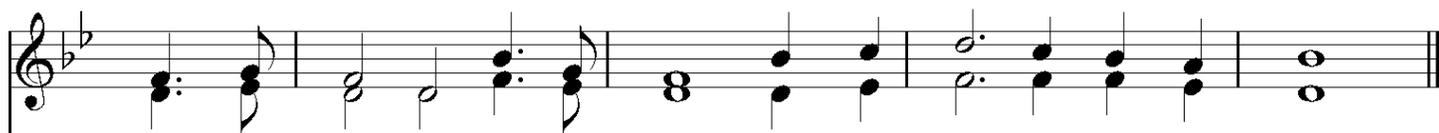
1 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee;
2 Should my tears for ev - er flow, should my zeal no lan - guor know,
3 While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine eye - lids close in death,



let the wa - ter and the blood from thy wound - ed side that flowed,
all for sin could not a - tone: thou must save, and thou a - lone;
when I rise to worlds un - known and be - hold thee on thy throne,



be of sin the dou - ble cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.
in my hand no price I bring, sim - ply to thy cross I cling.
Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.



Congregation may remain seated during the reading of the Gospel.

Officiant

A reading from the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." Just then his

disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” They left the city and were on their way to him. Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.” Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

Officiant

The Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Dave Muldoon

Nicene Creed

All stand as able and together say

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,**

**true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the People: Form VI

Dan Hall

All remain standing as able

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

We pray for: ***Matthew, Sue, the Thomas family, Jim, Catie, Jo, Lisa, Jennie & family, Stephanie, Jessie, Tracy, Ann, Johnny, Seena, Mary & Stan, Marilyn, Jeannie, Caroline, Laurie, Tamira, Heather, Fred, Henry, Sharon & family, David & Jackie, Gavin, Dee, Sam & Joyce, John, Judi, Linda, Heaven, John, Mike, Ashu, Karen, Ann, Eyerus, Maria, Justine, John, Don A., Mariah, Miryam, Rudy, David, Steve, Julie, Linda, Marilyn, Stephanie, Penny, Jim, Cyndy, Anne, Aaron & Devonne, Dwayne, Constance, Troy, Cheryl, Jordan, Jeremy; for the victims of domestic violence and gun violence; all who live and work at the Johnson Youth Center, SEARHC'S: Ravens Way, and Lemon Creek Correctional Center; all who live with addictions; all who suffer from long term illnesses; and for those who love and care for them.***

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For *Sean* our Presiding Bishop, and *Mark* our Bishop; and for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence

The People may add their own thanksgivings

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

Celebrant adds a concluding collect

Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

Peace

All Stand as able.

Officiant The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

The People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Holy Communion

The Officiant says

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; bring offerings and come into his courts. *Psalm 96:8*

Today's loose offering will go to the Glory Hall.

Offertory Hymn

ASHES

Tom Conry



1. We rise a-gain from ash-es, from the good we've failed to
2. We of-fer you our fail-ures, we ___ of-fer you at-
3. Then rise a-gain from ash-es, let ___ heal-ing come to
4. † Thanks be to the Fa-ther, who ___ made us like him-



1. do. We rise a-gain from ash-es, to cre-ate our-selves a-
2. tempts, the gifts not ful-ly giv-en, the ___ dreams not ful-ly
3. pain, though spring has turned to win-ter, and ___ sun-shine turned to
4. self. † Thanks be to his Son, ___ who saved us by his



1. new. If ___ all our world is ash-es, then ___ must our lives be
2. dreamt. Give our stum-bl-ings di-rec-tion, give our vi-sions wid-er
3. rain. The ___ rain we'll use for grow-ing, and cre-ate the world a-
4. death. † Thanks be to the Spir-it who cre-ates the world a-



1. true, an ___ of-fer-ing of ash-es, an of-fer-ing to you.
2. view, an ___ of-fer-ing of ash-es, an of-fer-ing to you.
3. new from an of-fer-ing of ash-es, an of-fer-ing to you.
4. new from an of-fer-ing of ash-es, an of-fer-ing to you.

© 1978, OCP. All rights reserved.

Reprinted & Streamed with permission under OneLicenseA-721147. All rights reserved.

The People stand as able and sing the Doxology as the offering is brought forward and placed on the Credence Table.

Doxology (*a hymn of praise*) See last page for music.

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow:
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.***

The service continues with the authorized Thanksgiving Prayer, all stand as able.

Prayer of Preparation for Communion

Officiant: God of all love we draw near with awe and reverence to the mystery of our Savior's Body and Blood.

People: Lord have mercy

May we commemorate his passion and recall his resurrection with pure hearts and unclouded faith.

People: Lord have mercy

For our sake he was born into the human family, mortal, tried and tempted as we are; and by his preaching of the kingdom he called us to the knowledge of your truth.

People: Lord have mercy

When he had fulfilled all things he was lifted up upon the cross, and rose from the dead, and was taken up into heaven to be the first-fruits of our human nature, the author and perfecter of faith.

People: Lord have mercy

Now he calls us to his table to become partakers of his grace.

People: Lord have mercy

With a humble will and with overflowing love may we receive your gift of everlasting life.

People: Lord have mercy

With pure prayer and abundant hope may we leave with you those things that are past and devote ourselves afresh to your service.

People: Lord have mercy

Grant us to receive the Holy One and to be hallowed by the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Grant us to share in the peace of Christ through the sacrament of peace.
Amen.

May this Holy Communion bring us to new life in your kingdom and unite us with all your Saints. **Amen.**

The Officiant continues

And now, as our Savior
Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,

People and Officiant

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Officiant says

Let us make our Holy Communion in the Body and Blood of Christ given to his people and received by faith.

All are welcome at the Lord's table. We are no longer strangers or guests but one family in the Lord. Let the Chalice Bearer know if you prefer alcohol free wine. Chalice Bearers – Jo Schoeppe & Dan Hall

Communion Music

Stephanie Hall & Elena Levi

After Communion, the Officiant says

Let us pray.

The Officiant and People together say

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Birthdays/Anniversaries

Please stand as able for any birthdays or anniversaries and together say

Prayer for Birthdays *(BCP 830, prayer 50)*

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servant *N.* as *he* begins another year. Grant that *he* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *his* trust in your goodness all the days of *his* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Anniversaries *(BCP p. 431)*

O God, you have so consecrated the covenant of marriage that in it is represented the spiritual unity between Christ and his Church: Send therefore your blessing upon these your servants, *N. and N.* that they may so love, honor, and cherish each other in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness. That their home may be a haven of blessing and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Announcements...See page 20...

People may be seated and announcements are now made.

Please stand as able and join in singing the Closing Hymn.

Closing Hymn

Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

Hymnal 690

1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim through this
2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, whence the heal - ing
3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land; I am weak, but thou art might - y;
stream doth flow; let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar
fears sub - side; death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion,

hold me with thy power - ful hand; bread of hea - ven,
lead me all my jour - ney through; strong de - liv - erer,
land me safe on Ca - naan's side; songs of prais - es,

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are arranged in three columns, corresponding to the three verses. The first system covers the first line of lyrics, the second system covers the second line, and the third system covers the third line. The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with block chords and moving lines.

bread of hea - ven, feed me now and ev - er -
 strong de - liv - erer, be thou still my strength and
 songs of prais - es, I will ev - er give to

more, feed me now and ev - er - more.
 shield, be thou still my strength and shield.
 thee, I will ev - er give to thee.

Words: William Williams (1717-1791); tr. Peter Williams (1722-1796), alt. Music: *Cwm Rhondda*, John Hughes (1873-1932)

Dismissal

Officiant Alleluia, alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

The Officiant says

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** *Romans 15:13*



Burial Service for Daisy Davenport
11:00 a.m. Saturday, March 14

Lenten Season Community Soup and Worship

5:30 p.m.

March 11th

Location: **Holy Trinity**

Address: **4th and Gold**

Soup and bread: **St. Brendan's** (*see Carla*)

**The Way of the Cross ~ Fridays during Lent at 5:30 p.m. ~ led by
Worship Leaders**



Sisters and Brothers Prayer Breakfast

8:00 a.m.

Friday, March 13, 2026

All are welcome!!!

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed!

It doesn't need to be elaborate...can be very simple

Talk to Carol Fujioka or Carla Adams



A Note on Today's Readings

The Third Sunday in Lent—Year A

Welcome to our worship service today on this Sunday of the Samaritan Woman. This story is one of the classic biblical passages for those preparing for baptism at Easter. As the woman was gradually enlightened about Jesus and about her relationship to God, so the candidates are growing in their relationship with God during Lent. They look forward to receiving in baptism the “living water” of God’s Spirit in their lives. Those already baptized are filled with that living water and continue to be enlightened by God’s Spirit.

In the first reading, we move forward in the history of salvation from the call of Abraham and Sarah to the account of Moses and Israel in the Exodus from Egypt. On the occasion we read about today, God provides water for the people in the desert. This is an image of God’s loving care for all people in the spiritual dryness of this world.

The second reading is about the new life we have in God through Christ. Jesus gave up his life for us, in order that we might be put right with God. In his death and resurrection, the estrangement between God and humanity is being repaired. We, in baptism, have been reconciled with God.

As people in the desert thirst for water, so Christians find in their Lenten living the thirst for life that only God can quench. All of us, both the baptized and those preparing for baptism, are, like the Samaritan woman, being enlightened and filled with the grace of the living water that comes from our Savior.

From *The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year*. Copyright © 2007 by Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing Incorporated, New York.

Ashes Type: Words and Music; First Line: *We rise again from ashes* Language: English © 1978, OCP. All rights reserved. Contributors: Tom Conry **Beyond the Days** Type: Words and Music; First Line: *Beyond the days of hope and myst'ry* Language: English © 1997, Ricky Manalo, CSP. Published by OCP. All rights reserved. Contributors: Ricky Manalo **Reprinted & Streamed with permission under OneLicenseA-721147. All rights reserved.**

"Being Perfect in Times of War"

*By the Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, VIIIth Bishop of Alaska
Episcopal Diocese of Alaska E~News March 6, 2026*

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."
Matthew 5:9

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Matthew 5:41-48

It is hard to be perfect. In fact, I'm pretty certain I have never achieved perfection in anything, and certainly not the perfection of God. Therefore, I am grateful to have Jesus' love, forgiveness, and example to turn to when it comes to my failure to achieve Godly perfection.

As the Gospel of John proclaims: "Jesus is the way, the truth and the life." No one comes to God's perfection except through Him--his example; his forgiveness; and his love. As Christians, called by His name, our full devotion and allegiance, therefore, must be to the Kingdom of God that Jesus manifests--The perfect Kingdom of God.

It is hard to be perfect as God is perfect, as the Kingdom God is perfect. It is even harder to be perfect in times of war. There is no denying that while we are citizens of the Kingdom of God we are also citizens of an earthly nation. This, too, comes with responsibilities and obligations. But our primary allegiance, our first citizenship, is in heaven (Phil 3:20). Our responsibilities and our devotion must always be to the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, mercy, reconciling justice, accountability in divine love, and peace.

Our earthly nation is now at war (or any other descriptors being used that are just really just distinctions without a difference). In times of conflict it can become even more difficult to hold onto our primary allegiance to the

Kingdom of God; our devotion to the perfect way of Jesus will be challenged. As citizens of an earthly nation at war we will be challenged to accept that the leaders of this world define what is moral--what is right. We will be called to show unity, patriotism, and support for actions that are contrary to the perfection of the Kingdom of God and antithetical to the teachings and way of Jesus. Fear and shame will likely rise to meet the Kingdom's resistance to the false claims and authority of this world.

But our faith and our hope is on Jesus Christ alone. May we endure in his way of love and persist in our resistance to the ways of this world by striving always for the Kingdom of God. As St. Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, we know that faith and hope and love abide all things. Let them rise in you to meet the challenges of this world and to guide you and keep you in the perfect way of God's Kingdom where no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness (BCP prayer 4 "For Peace").

As we strive to be perfect in the Kingdom of God, let us be fervent in prayer. Praying for Peace (BCP page 815 #4). Praying for our Enemies (BCP page 816 #6). For our Country and those in authority (BCP pages 820-21 #s 18,19,20, etc.). And praying for those in the Armed Forces of our Country (BCP page 823 #25)*.

*Our prayers for those who serve in the Armed Forces are particularly important. Especially as war exacts moral wounds on soldiers that form scars that are often carried silently long after the end of active conflict. As Stanley Hauerwas, Gilbert T. Rowe Professor Emeritus of Theological Ethics at Duke Divinity School stated so well in a recent article in *The Christian Century*:

"So we pray. But we pray differently. We pray as people who lament this war and the stories told to justify it. We pray for those who have died and those who will die. We pray for soldiers, not with amorphous calls for safety, but with genuine concern for their hearts and their spiritual health. And we pray for the church—that it would be a place where truth can be told, where wounds can be named, and where the peace of Christ is not just a word but a way of life.

This doesn't mean we, as the church, blame soldiers. It's quite the opposite. As one Christian body, we walk with them, we listen to them, we learn from them. We love them enough to tell the truth. We don't expect them to carry the weight of our silence. We expect the church to carry the weight of their healing."

